2. Very dense forest and open forest in the 28 Tiger Reserves have shown an increase of 33 km^2 and 124 km^2 respectively, while moderately dense forest has decreased by 251 km^2.

3. Major loss in forest cover has occurred in Nameri, Buxa, Manas, Indravati and Dampa Tiger Reserves mainly due to socio-economic reasons and natural disasters.

4. Forest cover in the Outer Surround (10 km. radial distance from periphery) has increased in case of two Tiger Reserves, decreased in case of 21 Tiger Reserves and is unchanged in case of five Tiger Reserves.

5. The total forest cover in the Outer Surround of the 28 Tiger Reserves has decreased by 124 km^2.

Shifting of big cats

1848. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sariska tiger reserve is not fit for tiger as per ecological analysis of the reserve; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to shift the big cats, if any, to a better habitat of tigers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As advised by this Ministry, the State (Rajasthan), has submitted a recovery plan for Sariska Tiger Reserve, which includes reintroduction of tiger. The Wildlife Institute of India has recommended reintroduction of five tigers (three females and two males), subject to fulfillment of conditions for habitat recovery.

Clearance to Irrigation Projects

1849. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given environmental and forest clearance to every major and medium irrigation project in the last two years;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that such clearances are being given on the approvals of DIG Forest level officers;